

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: INCLUSION OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN 1978 UNHCR
REGULAR BUDGET

REF: GENEVA 6462

1. DEPARTMENT IS DISTURBED TO LEARN FROM REFTEL THAT UNHCR IS ONCE AGAIN PLANNING TO EXCLUDE THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PROGRAM FROM HIS REGULAR BUDGET. WE CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT ANY REFUGEE PROBLEM WHICH CANNOT BE REASONABLY SOLVED WITHIN AN IDENTIFIABLE TIME FRAME SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE UNHCR'S REGULAR BUDGET AND PROGRAM AND NOT CARRIED YEAR AFTER YEAR AS A SPECIAL ACTIVITY. PROGRAMS SUCH AS CYPRUS WHICH INVOLVE DISPLACED PERSONS RATHER THAN REFUGEES AND WHICH ARE OUTSIDE UNHCR'S MANDATE SHOULD OF COURSE FALL INTO THE CATEGORY OF SPECIAL ACTIVITIES. WE RECOGNIZE THAT NEW REFUGEE PROBLEMS ARISE FROM TIME-TO-TIME AFTER UNHCR
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HAS DEVELOPED HIS ANNUAL BUDGET. CLEARLY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES UNHCR IF HE CANNOT MEET THE NEEDS FROM HIS EMERGENCY FUND IS OBLIGED TO ISSUE SPECIAL APPEALS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO MEET SUCH NEW REQUIREMENTS. WE SUPPORT THIS PROCEDURE AND OFTEN RESPOND WITH SPECIAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS. HOWEVER, IF SUCH REQUIREMENTS EXTEND INTO A NEW BUDGET YEAR THEY SHOULD THEN BECOME PART OF THE UNHCR

REGULAR PROGRAM. THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEES ARE A CASE IN POINT.

2. THE INDOCHINESE IN QUESTION WHETHER THEY BE BOAT CASES OR CAMP DWELLERS IN THAILAND ARE BONA FIDE REFUGEES ELIGIBLE FOR UNHCR MANDATE STATUS WITH ATTENDANT PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE AS APPROPRIATE. WE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FOR OVER TWO YEARS AND HAVE REQUESTED OF THE CONGRESS ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE THROUGH FY-1978. IT IS LIKELY THAT FUNDS IN FY-1979 WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED. THE PROGRAM OR THOSE ASPECTS OF IT OF CONCERN TO THE UNHCR SHOULD CLEARLY BE PART OF HIS REGULAR BUDGET.

3. UNHCR HAS STATED THAT CURRENTLY THERE ARE OVER TWO MILLION REFUGEES OF CONCERN TO HIS OFFICE. THE UNHCR REGULAR PROGRAM FOR 1977 PROJECTS A NEED FOR ONLY 16,663,000 DOLLARS. UNHCR'S TABLE 3 OF ANNEX II OF E/5987 SHOWS AN ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR 14,400,000 DOLLARS IN 1977 FOR REFUGEES FROM INDOCHINA TO WHICH ONLY FOUR GOVERNMENTS HAVE SO FAR CONTRIBUTED. WE ALSO MUST NOTE THAT ONLY TWELVE GOVERNMENTS CONTRIBUTED TO THE 1975-1976 PROGRAM FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND. ELEVEN GOVERNMENTS CONTRIBUTED LESS THAN 2 MILLION DOLLARS AGAINST A TARGET OF 12.4 MILLION DOLLARS. THE U.S. BORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE LION'S SHARE. HOWEVER, EIGHTY GOVERNMENTS CONTRIBUTED TO THE UNHCR'S REGULAR PROGRAM IN 1976. CARRYING THE PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND AS A SPECIAL ACTIVITY HAS SEEMED TO WORK AGAINST BROADER FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY GOVERNMENTS. IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO DEFEND BEFORE THE CONGRESS SUCH LIMITED PARTICIPATION IN THIS MOST TRAGIC AND COMPELLING REFUGEE SITUATION.

4. THE PROPOSAL OF THE UNHCR TO FOOTNOTE THE 1978 BUDGET WE AGREE WILL EMPHASIZE THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE SAHRAOUIDI REFUGEE PROBLEM AND NO DOUBT AGAIN OCCUPY THE OCTOBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN PROLONGED DEBATE. TOO MUCH TIME WAS SPENT ON THAT QUESTION LAST OCTOBER AND INTERFERRED WITH MORE USEFUL DISCUSSION OF THE WORK BEFORE THE COMMITTEE. WE WOULD HOPE THAT A SIMILAR DEBATE COULD BE AVOIDED AT THE NEXT SESSION. FOOTNOTING THE INDOCHINESE PROGRAM IN THAILAND WOULD NOT IN OUR VIEW ENHANCE THAT POSSIBILITY. OUR STRONG PREFERENCE THEREFORE IS TO HAVE ASSISTANCE TO INDOCHINESE REFUGEES PLACED IN THE REGULAR BUDGET

5. ACCORDINGLY, U.S. MISSION IS REQUESTED AGAIN TO REFLECT THE U.S. POSITION TO UNHCR AS A GENERAL AND DESIRABLE

PRINCIPLE. THE U.S. DELEGATION AT THE OCTOBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SESSION WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO REINFORCE THIS POINT OF VIEW AND ARGUE FOR ITS ADOPTION AS AN ACCEPTED PROCEDURE. IT WILL ALSO SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS THE INDO-CHINA REFUGEE PROGRAM WHEN THE DRAFT 1978 BUDGET IS RENEWED. CHRISTOPHER

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